

10 Tips for Getting Health Coverage through the SHOP Marketplace in 2014

The SHOP Marketplace makes it possible for small businesses to provide qualified health plans to their employees. No matter what state you do business in, you'll have access to the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) Marketplace. In some states, you'll use the state's website to apply for coverage. In other cases you'll use HealthCare.gov.

Visit HealthCare.gov/marketplace/shop/ to find the right SHOP for your business.

The tips below will help employers with buying coverage through the SHOP Marketplace on HealthCare.gov.

- 1) **Decide your budget:** Determine in advance how much you want to contribute towards employee premium costs.
- 2) **Decide who you'll cover:** In SHOP you must provide coverage for all full-time employees, but offering dependent coverage is optional. Consider whether your employees have dependents they may want to include in family coverage, and decide if you'll offer dependent coverage.
- 3) **Find out what your employee health needs are:** You should balance the health needs of eligible employees with your budget to determine which plan works best for both.
- 4) **Compare plans:** The SHOP Marketplace has tools available to help small businesses make informed coverage decisions for their employees. You can browse health and dental plan information using our Plan and Premium Estimation Tool at HealthCare.gov/find-premium-estimates/. You'll see available plans and sample prices based on several scenarios.
- 5) **Get help:** "Find Local Help" at Localhelp.HealthCare.gov/ is available to help employers find agents and brokers through local associations. Agents and brokers who have completed the SHOP agreement can help you walk through the plan comparison, selection, and direct enrollment process.
- 6) **Choose the plan that's right for your business:** Once you decide which SHOP health or dental plan best meets your needs, you can work with an agent, broker, or directly with the insurance company to get a final price quote. If you're going to claim the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit, employees must be enrolled in a SHOP health plan.

- 7) **Enroll your employees:** Work with a SHOP agent, broker or the insurance company to offer employees coverage and enroll those that accept coverage by the coverage effective date you chose. In 2014, employees may have to complete the insurance company's application.
- 8) **Pay the premium:** Once employees enroll, you'll send the first month's premium to the agent or broker, or to directly to the insurance company.
- 9) **Submit your SHOP application:** The sooner you submit your SHOP application, the better. If you want to claim the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit, you'll need to complete the SHOP Employer Application to get a SHOP eligibility determination. The application can be submitted throughout the year, but to qualify for the credit, you must get an eligible determination before filing returns for the 2014 tax year. You should submit the application within a week of enrolling in SHOP coverage.
Visit HealthCare.gov/downloads/shop-employer-application.pdf to download the SHOP employer application.
- 10) **Claim tax credits:** If you qualify, you can take advantage of the expanded Small Business Healthcare Tax Credit for providing SHOP coverage. You'll claim the credit when filing your returns for the 2014 tax year. Work with your tax preparer to complete the correct form. The IRS will be responsible for determining whether you qualify for the credit. For more information on the Small Business Healthcare Tax Credit, visit HealthCare.gov/will-i-qualify-for-small-business-health-care-tax-credits/.

